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Quarterly

LOS ANGELES
COUNTY MUSEUM

WINTER

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM

EXPOSITION PARK

LOS ANGELES 7, CALIFORNIA

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Mediaeval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts

An Exhibition

The West Coast's first large exhibition of Mediaeval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts is now being held at the Los Angeles County Museum, through January 9, 1954. The manuscripts date from the IX to the XVI century and contain many examples of world-wide fame. They are lent by The Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, The National Gallery in Washington, D. C., The Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, The Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, Princeton University Library, The Chicago Art Institute, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Houghton Library of Harvard University, and other libraries and collections.

This will be a unique opportunity to study the art of painting in the Middle Ages for many of the illuminations in the manuscripts were executed in those centuries from which no other painting exists, or only on the walls of churches or in collections in Europe. From these one can get a superb idea of what painting was like in Europe in the Middle Ages and early Renaissance. These manuscripts will also afford a great opportunity for the study of early bookmaking and decoration as well as the study of handwriting.

The illustration on the cover is taken from A Book of Hours written and illuminated in France by Jean Bourdichon in the second half of the XV century. It has been lent by Dr. Jacob Hirsch of New York. The scene selected for illustration is the Presentation in the Temple, appropriate to this season.

Chamber Music For Everyone

One of the Sunday "musts" for followers of good music living in the southland, is the three o'clock chamber music concert broadcast from the Los Angeles County Museum every Sunday in the year. This concert is heard by a large audience in the Museum, and by a radio audience estimated at 50,000 listeners throughout Southern California.

This program, now in its sixth year of performance, is only possible through the generous cooperation of a number of organizations and many individuals.

Beginning in 1947 at the suggestion of John Anson Ford, County Supervisor, a thirteen-week series of concerts was organized around the theme: Historical Development of Chamber Music. Starting with the duo, each program added an instrument and successively developed the chamber combinations from two performers through to the chamber symphony. These concerts were introduced and discussed by leading musical personalities of this area, and finally, original works of art, paintings,

sculptures, and tapestries associated with the musical program by form, content, or mood were exhibited in the music hall during the concert.

One half hour of these early concerts was carried as a public service program by Radio Station KFWB. In 1940 the Music Station KFAC offered to carry the concert for a full hour each Sunday afternoon, if the Museum could guarantee continuous and uninterrupted concerts weekly throughout the year. When this was accomplished, a schedule of four thirteen-week series was established. This was a challenging proposal, for few cities in the world, and perhaps only in Los Angeles are there sufficient top ranking musicians qualified to maintain such a schedule without monotonous repetition of performers and works. Southern California has such a resident population of musicians, due primarily to the steady demand for their services by the motion picture industry.

The financing of this unique series has been made possible through a grant from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, which carries the concerts for six months; the remaining six months are financed from a grant from the Performance Trust Fund of the Recording Industry, and is made available to us through the American Federation of Musicians, Local 47, John te Groen, President.

Credit Due Hancock Foundation

The Museum has underwritten a large share of the expense such as telephone line charges, printed programs, and the time of two Division of Education personnel in producing the live and air program. Much credit is due the Hancock Foundation of the University of Southern California, for providing engineers, announcers, and radio facilities.

Many special programs are arranged throughout the year such as the all-Schoenberg concert; the all-Krenek program; an abridged concert version of the Guild Opera Company's production of Mozart's great opera "The Abduction from the Seraglio," conducted by Wolfgang Martin. On December 21, 1952 the Roger Wagner Chorale and Orchestra



The Compinsky Trio



Hollywood String Quartet



Seidel String Quartet with Guest.



American Art Quartet

with soloists presented "The B Minor Mass" by Johann Sebastian Bach. This extensive work lasted two and one-half hours, and the Music Room at the Museum was filled to capacity, overflowing into side galleries where the audience stood for the full length of the performance. On Palm Sunday, 1953, the Los Angeles Symphonic Chorus and Double Chamber Orchestra gave "The Passion According to St. Matthew," directed by Carlton Martin. Due to lack of museum space this performance was held in Bovard Auditorium of the University of Southern California before an audience estimated at 1500.

National Recognition

That the Museum's chamber music concerts have become nationally recognized is evidenced by an article appearing in printed book form, of the Report and statement of the Trustee of the Music Performance Trust Fund of New York City, which reads as follows: "By long odds, the most distinguished series of performances, from an artistic point of view, presented anywhere by the Trust Fund, is a weekly chamber music series played every Sunday afternoon throughout the year in the auditorium of the Los Angeles County Museum. Half of these are paid for by the Trust Fund, half are contributed by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. Chamber music programs of the highest and purest quality are played by small groups of renowned musicians, most of whom command fees many times the scale paid by the Trust Fund, but who accept it as a gesture on their part toward the success of the project."

Tape Recordings Distributed

From the standpoint of public relations, this is one of the most important activities of the Division of Education, because it reaches an enormous and discriminating audience. In addition, tape recordings of these concerts distributed over a circuit of educational radio outlets across the country, have made it possible to repeat these concerts in over thirty metropolitan areas from here to New York, and have done much to establish the name of the Los Angeles County Museum as one of the leading museums of this country.

Russell J. Smith
Chief, Division of Education

Vampire Quest

Mexican jade was the main objective of the expedition, but the museum field party encountered vampire bats—lots of them!

This meeting with blood-drinking vampires came about as a result of an expedition organized in the summer of 1951 by Dr. Raymond J. Barber, the museum's mineralogist. The site of operations was the State of Oaxaca in southern Mexico where Dr. Barber was concentrating his search for native jade in America.

The writer had accompanied Dr. Barber in order

to continue studies on the mammals of Mexico. Research was concentrated particularly on the various forms of bats occurring in Oaxaca, and especially on the vampire bat. The museum's collections were in need of specimens of vampires, and it was hoped that these interesting and ferocious little creatures would be found in the Oaxaca area.

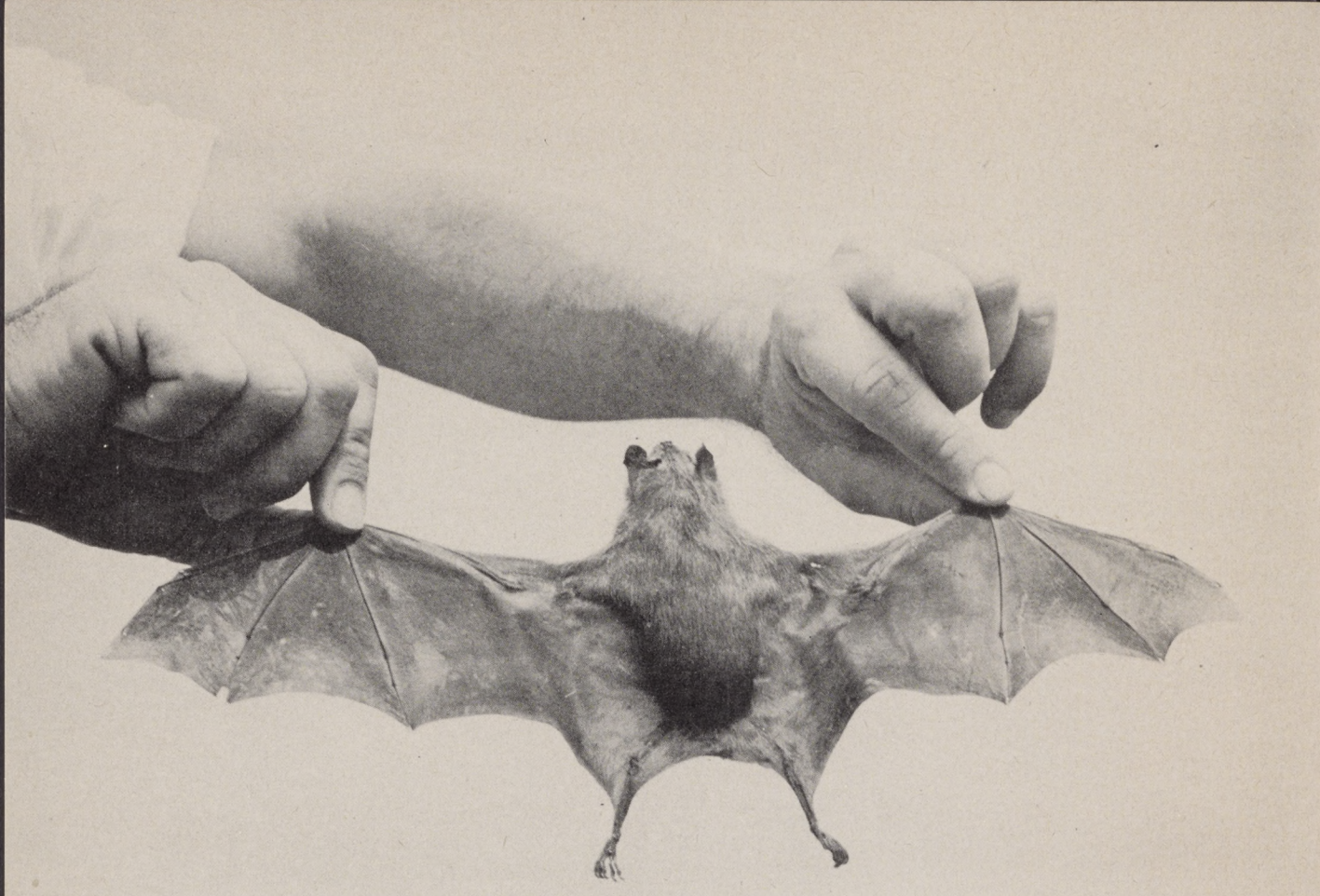
The vampire bat (*Desmodus rotundus*) is not a figment of man's imagination or a mythical creature associated with witches' tales, stories of werewolves and draculas. Quite the contrary, it exists

Entrance to cave of the vampires, located east of Mitla, Oaxaca, Mexico. Zapotec Indian guide standing at cave mouth with net used to capture vampires.



Head view of a vampire bat showing the sharp canine and incisor teeth especially modified for making a small round bite from which the blood will flow.





Vampire bat with wings spread, to demonstrate the relatively small size of the animal.

in the new world tropics as a definite species of medium-sized bat which feeds on nothing other than fresh blood.

To obtain this specialized meal, the swarms of vampires leave the dark recesses of their roosting caves just after nightfall and flit out over the countryside in search of a victim. The vampire is not too particular as to whom its victim will be—just as long as it is a warm-blooded animal such as a horse, cow, a burro, a sheep, a chicken, or oftentimes even a man.

By means of a quick bite inflicted by teeth adapted for this purpose, the vampire removes a tiny bit of skin, thus causing the blood to flow. Then, by resting above the wound, the bat laps up the flowing blood in much the same manner as a cat drinks milk from a saucer. It does not suck blood as was

formerly believed. Continual predation on a group of domestic animals by vampires can cause serious damage due to the weakening of the animals by loss of blood. The greatest danger from vampires, however, is the possibility of transmission of rabies when a bat has previously fed upon a rabid animal.

The area of our encounter with vampire bats was in the eastern end of the Oaxaca Valley near the little town of Mitla. Mitla is the site of some of the most impressive and important archaeological ruins in all of Mexico—the crumbling temples of the once-proud Zapotec empire. Mitla means "the place of the dead," and one might imagine that here the vampires would make their home. However, although they undoubtedly dart among the ruined courtyards and temple walls in the course of their blood-letting expeditions, they re-

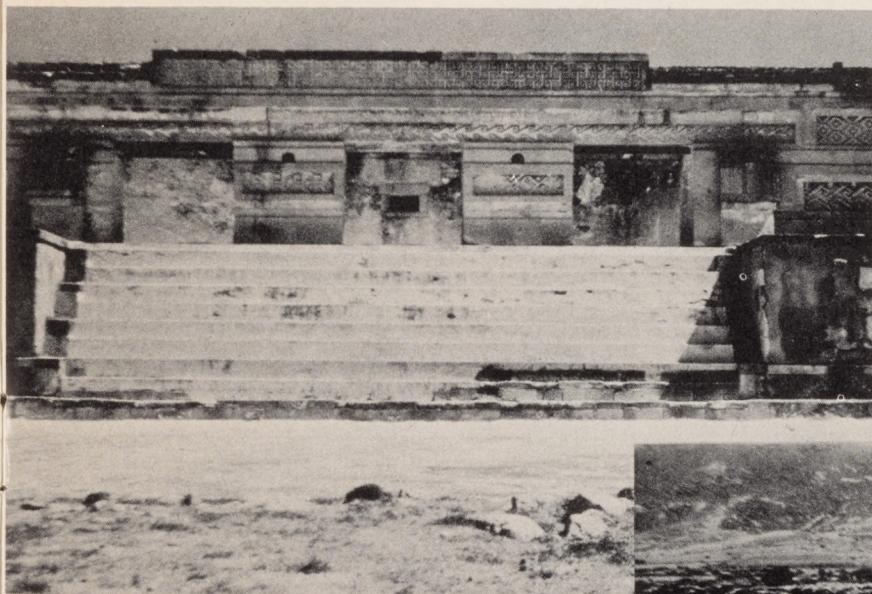
turn to roosting caves high among the limestone hills surrounding the valley for their day time sleep. Hanging from the ceilings of these caves, their bellies engorged with fresh blood, the vampires sleep throughout the day disturbed by no one other than a vampire-seeking mammalogist from the Los Angeles County Museum.

The natives Zapotecs living in the valley are aware of vampires and their depredations on the local animal life, but they apparently know nothing of the habits of bats or where they roost during the day. This was clearly evident when it was found that a native goatherd had been sheltering his flock inside the big vampire cave each night, unaware that one of the predators he was trying to avoid

was hungrily eyeing the goat herd from the cave ceiling above. As soon as darkness came, the vampire had only to drop upon the animals below for the evening meal. Examination of burros, goats, oxen, horses and cows in the valley revealed the tell-tale tiny bite marks on the withers which meant that each of them had provided sustenance for the vampires of Mitla.

The vampire bat occurs only in the tropical areas of America from Mexico southward, and to date has never been found in the United States. Vampires first found their way into European legends of blood sucking creatures when the expeditions of Spanish Conquistadors returned to Europe with tales of encounters with the blood-hungry bats of Central and South America.

Kenneth E. Stager
Curator of Birds and Mammals



Temple ruins at Mitla, Oaxaca, not far from the vampire caves (in hills in background). The bats evidently preferred the quiet caves to the crumbling ruins.



Recent Acquisition



The Museum announces the purchase of a rare and very important early Indian bronze of the Hindu god Surya, the Sun-god. The image, mounted on a wooden stand, measures 11 1/4 inches in height, and dates from the ninth or tenth century A.D. It was made in the Kashmir region of Northern India.

The deity, represented in symmetrical, frontal pose may be identified as Surya by the presence of the full-blown lotus flower with long stalk held in each hand. The figure is clad in the Indian dhoti, covering the legs and lower body. A scarf, draped over the shoulders falls in long, elegant folds over the arms, matching the graceful curves of the torso. The deity also wears a long jewelled chain, elaborate jewelry and a high jewelled crown. The halo with beaded border is in the form of a full-blown lotus. The 'third eye' on the forehead, and the center of the two lotus flowers held in each hand are inlaid with silver.

ons of Oriental Art

An important group of ancient Chinese ceramics has recently been donated as an anonymous gift in memory of the late Ernest Larsen Blanck. The group of six ceramics includes several examples of Chinese ceramic art of the Sung dynasty, among them a very important celadon jar of the Sung dynasty, and two representative examples from the Ming dynasty.

The celadon jar is of a very characteristic type made in the Sung dynasty at the Lung-ch'üan kilns, in the district by that name, in the province of Chekiang. The jar is made of high-fired gray stoneware, burnt reddish brown at the exposed foot-rim on account of the high iron content of the clay, and is covered with a thick, glossy bluish green glaze commonly known as celadon. A powerfully modelled dragon in full relief winds around the shoulder of the jar, and the reclining figure of a dog may be recognized on top of the low, dome-shaped cover. Lung-ch'üan celadon attained its greatest fame in the eleventh and twelfth century. Although still produced in the Ming dynasty, the later celadons never attained the beauty and brilliant color of the Sung wares. The Museum is therefore most fortunate to have in its collection the rare and extremely important Lung-ch'üan jar of the Sung dynasty, as a result of Mrs. Blanck's generous gift.





Among recent accessions is the gift of a jar of the Sung Dynasty (960-1279 A.D.) from Jack G. Kuhrt of Los Angeles. This Chinese ceramic art is very similar to a jar in the Cleveland Museum. It is of Tz'u-chou ware—buff-colored stoneware with painted decoration of dragon, phoenix, cloud scrolls and floral motifs. The ornament is painted in two shades of brown on cream-colored slip under a transparent natural glaze.



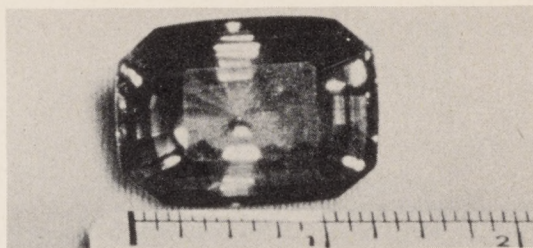
Pictured here is the reverse side of the above Chinese jar.

Sinhalite, A New Gem Mineral

The Museum was recently the fortunate recipient of the largest known specimen of the new gem, sinhalite. This golden brown gem, beautifully cut, and weighing 158 carats, was the gift of Mr. William E. Phillips, well-known jeweler of Los Angeles.

Although specimens of the mineral had been in museum collections for many years, they were usually classed as tourmaline, beryl, chrysoberyl, or zircon when untested. Tested specimens were noted to have certain peculiarities, but were classed as "brown peridot." Peridot is the gem variety of olivine, and is usually greenish in color. Dr. George Switzer, of the United States National Museum, was the first (1950) to prove definitely that these brown stones were wrongly classified. Not until 1952, however, was a final careful analysis made—at the British Museum (Natural History). The name sinhalite was chosen for the new mineral referring to its occurrence in Ceylon (Sanskrit—*Sinhalam*), the only locality in which the mineral is yet known.

Mr. William E. Phillips, president of the Los Angeles William E. Phillips Company, poses with his 158 carat sinhalite, recently presented as a gift to the Museum.



Actual size of sinhalite gem. Note effect of doubling of facets due to the manner in which the gem refracts light.

Chemically sinhalite is a borate of magnesium and aluminum, whereas olivine is a silicate of magnesium and ferrous iron. Though they are similar in crystalline structure, hardness and color, they are easily separable because sinhalite has a density of 3.46 or more as compared with 3.27-3.37 for olivine; also it has a higher refractive index, or luster, and the stone is remarkably clear and free of "feathers" and flaws, which is not so with most, if not all brown peridots. Another important quality of sinhalite is that it is optically negative; this serves to distinguish it from chrysoberyl and zircon as well as olivine.

Properties of sinhalite which make it attractive as a gem have to do with the way in which it reflects and absorbs light. A ray of light entering the gem is broken up into two separate rays which in a cut stone produces the effect of a multiplicity of facets. Its manner of absorbing light causes the gem to be variously colored in shades of yellow, brown or green. The Phillips specimen is a blazing amber, with pale greenish yellow lights.

Mr. Phillips purchased the gem in Ceylon and it was originally analyzed at the Smithsonian Institution as tourmaline. Its true identity was revealed last year, after the new mineral, sinhalite, was discovered. Although specimens of sinhalite tend to be large, and several are known which are over 20 carats in weight, the Phillips gem, at 158 carats, was found to be more than twice the size of the largest specimen heretofore known. The gem is now displayed in the Museum's recently redesigned Mineral Hall with a large collection of other faceted gems generously loaned by Mr. Phillips.

Lorna Lyons Wise
Assistant in Mineralogy

AN EARLY BIRD



First bone of Mancalla to be discovered, and only specimen known for over thirty years. Upper bone of left wing, actual size.

The mounted skeleton of a bird which lived in southern California five million years ago will soon take its place among the fossils in the Museum's mezzanine exhibit. To the casual observer, it may appear to be a rather drab little gray skeleton, but to the scientists who have studied it, it represents a climax to a fascinating series of discoveries which began over a half century ago.

At the turn of the century, the Third Street tunnel in Los Angeles was in process of excavation. A collection of shells and one bird bone—a part of a wing—were found in deposits determined by geologists to be of Pliocene age. This was the first fossil bird discovered in California. From this one bone—broken at one end—Dr. Frederick A. Lucas of the United States National Museum described the bird as an oceanic swimmer related to the auks and murres, but completely flightless. He further stated that the bird had paddle-like wings, more highly specialized for under water swimming than those of its near relative, the Great Auk (which became

extinct within historic time), but not quite so extremely modified as in the living penguins. He named the bird *Mancalla*, which means imperfect or defective (*manc*) auk (*alla*).

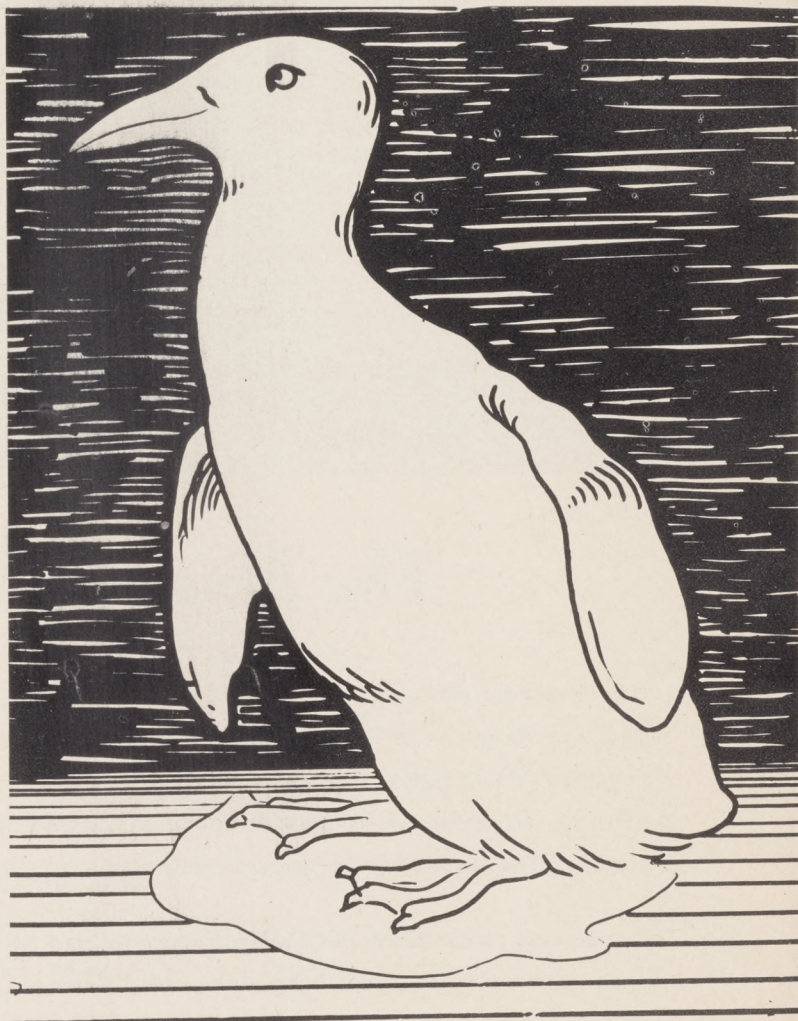
For over thirty years nothing more was known of *Mancalla*. Then development of highways and streets revealed other deposits of Pliocene age south of Los Angeles, and bones of this bird appeared again. Extensive road work around San Diego brought to light more and more bones. It finally became evident that the area now occupied by parts of that city must, at one time, have been a large lagoon, with tidal flats where hundreds of these flightless swimmers congregated, safe from predatory creatures of the land.

Since 1947 the Museum has collected in the San Diego area every year, following the winter rains. The deposits are of loosely consolidated sandstone, the bones occurring in narrow bands. Concentrated excavation is found to yield little compared with the natural erosion caused by rain. Housing developments are now closing this source of fossils of the little swimmer of the Pliocene, and landscaping may soon obliterate all evidence of the presence of a shore of five million years ago.

In no instance was a complete skeleton found in place, but as the number of separate bones increased to over two hundred in the Museum's collection, it was decided to attempt to combine the bones of many individuals to reconstruct a skeleton. Under the skillful hands of the technician, Mr. William Otto, *Mancalla* has taken form. The skeleton stands 11½ inches high, and in all essential characters it substantiates the description which Dr. Lucas presented fifty-two years ago on the basis of but a single bone.

Hildegarde Howard
Chief Curator, Division of Science

Artist's restoration of *Mancalla*, the flightless swimmer in southern California waters five million years ago.





The Museum Bookshop

The Museum's Bookshop, three years old last October, is now equipped to provide a discerning public with a wide variety of interesting items. Books, prints, slides, post cards, periodicals, sculpture replicas, notepaper and Christmas cards are available, many reproduced from the Museum's own collections, or written by staff members. Booklets for children are offered in various natural history subjects, and sets of stamps depicting birds and mammals are proving very popular.

In addition to the Museum's own publications, here listed, many other standard works in History, Science or Art are offered for both adults and children.

List of Items Available in the Bookshop

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Add 5 cents for mail orders except for item starred*

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Common Sea Shells of Los Angeles County (in preparation) by Dr. Howard R. Hill and Pauline Downing Tompkins.....	price to be announced
Amphibians and Reptiles of Los Angeles County by Dr. Howard R. Hill.....	.35
Common Birds of the Los Angeles County Coast by George Willett.....	.35
Common Birds of the Los Angeles County Mountains by George Willett.....	.35
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Habitat Groups of North American Mammals by Melville N. Lincoln.....	.35
Race and Culture in the Pacific Islands by Robert M. Ariss.....	.20

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Gothic and Renaissance Sculpture by Dr. W. R. Valentiner.....	3.00
The Gothic Room by Ebria Feinblatt.....	.50
European Paintings from the 14th Through the 18th Centuries, in the Collection of the L. A. County Museum by Dr. Paul Wescher (in preparation).....	price to be announced

LOAN EXHIBITIONS

Leonardo Da Vinci, by Dr. W. R. Valentiner.....	2.00
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Rico Lebrun, Paintings and Drawings of the Crucifixion by James B. Byrnes.....	.50
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The Art of Greater India by Henry Trubner.....	2.25
Chinese Paintings by Henry Trubner.....	2.00
Chinese Ceramics by Henry Trubner.....	2.00
Artists of Los Angeles (catalog issued annually; back issues available, at various prices) (1953)	1.25

PERIODICALS

Bulletin of the Art Division (quarterly publication).....	\$.25
The Quarterly, Articles on History, Science and Art (published by the Museum Association)	.25
The Bulletin of the Art Division and the Quarterly are sent to all members of the Museum Association. Additional copies can be purchased at the Bookshop.	

SCIENCE AND HISTORY LEAFLETS

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Foxes and Elephants of the Channel Islands by Dr. Chester Stock.....	\$.10
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KODACHROME SLIDES

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11 x 14 inch color prints of paintings by the Masters, including four from the Museum's own collection, at 40 cents each. List sent on request.

POST CARDS

Post cards in color are available for a number of subjects in both Art and Science. 3 x 5 cards 10 cents each, three for 25 cents; 6 x 9 cards 15 cents each, two for 25 cents.

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Christmas cards with reproductions of famous paintings and woodcuts, and others by modern artists are available at various prices.

Notepaper and correspondence cards designed by well known artists in the field of natural history are available in bird, marine, floral and butterfly designs. Also an assortment of notepaper in Chinese motifs. \$1.00 per box (mailing charges extra).

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Outside the city of Los Angeles, 3 per cent.

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